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LOWE'S HOME CENTERS, LLC

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

Jennifer Tapia and Carrie Johnson,  
Plaintiffs,

v.

LOWE'S Home Centers, LLC; and  
DOES 1-50, inclusive.,  
Defendants.

Case No.: 2:25-cv-02229-GW-AGR  
*[Los Angeles County Superior Court Case  
No.: 24TRCV04342]*

[Hon. George H. Wu, District Judge  
Hon. Alicia G. Rosenberg, Magistrate  
Judge]

**[DISCOVERY MATTER]**  
**STIPULATED PROTECTIVE ORDER**  
**NOTE CHANGES MADE BY COURT**

Complaint Filed: December 19, 2024

1. A. PURPOSES AND LIMITATIONS

Discovery in this action is likely to involve production of confidential, proprietary, or private information for which special protection from public disclosure and from use for any purpose other than prosecuting this litigation may be warranted. Accordingly, the parties hereby stipulate to and petition the Court to enter the following Stipulated Protective Order. The parties acknowledge that this Order does not confer blanket protections on all disclosures or responses to discovery and that the protection it affords from public disclosure and use extends only to the limited information or items that are entitled to confidential treatment under the applicable legal principles. The parties further acknowledge, as set forth in Section 12.3, below,

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1 that this Stipulated Protective Order does not entitle them to file confidential  
2 information under seal; **Local Rule 79-5** sets forth the procedures that must be  
3 followed and the standards that will be applied when a party seeks permission from  
4 the court to file material under seal.

5 **B. GOOD CAUSE STATEMENT**

6 Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, Rule 26(c)(1) states in pertinent part, that the  
7 Court, upon a showing of good cause may “issue an order to protect a party from  
8 annoyance, embarrassment, oppression, or undue burden or expense.” Fed.R.Civ.P.  
9 26(c)(1). In the instant matter, Defendant Lowe’s Home Centers, LLC’s Confidential  
10 Documents contain proprietary and confidential trade secret information relating to  
11 Defendant Lowe’s Home Centers, LLC’s business practices, policies and procedures,  
12 its safety protocol, and information about its video surveillance system. Defendant  
13 Lowe’s Home Centers, LLC. (“Defendant” or “Lowe’s”) derives independent  
14 economic value from maintaining the confidentiality of the policies and procedures set  
15 forth in these Confidential Documents.

16 Defendant is a retailer in the home improvement industry and has conducted  
17 business in California since 1998. The home improvement retail industry is very  
18 competitive. As a result of years of investing time and money in research and  
19 investigation, Defendant developed the policies contained in the Confidential  
20 Documents for the purposes of maintaining the security of its facilities, providing  
21 quality customer service, and ensuring the safety of its employees, customers, and  
22 other invitees. These policies and procedures, as memorialized in the Confidential  
23 Documents, were created and generated by Lowe’s for Lowe’s, and are used for the  
24 purposes of maintaining safety at its stores and creating efficient and organized work  
25 environments for its employees. As a result, Defendant is able to minimize the waste  
26 of any resources, which is a key factor in generating profitability for its business.

27 Defendant derives economic value from maintaining the secrecy of its Confidential  
28 Documents. If disclosed to the public, the trade secret information contained in

Defendant's Confidential Documents would reveal Defendant's internal operations and could potentially be used by competitors as a means to compete for its customers, interfere with its business plans and thereby gain unfair business advantages. If Defendant's safety protocol were revealed to the general public, it would hinder Defendant's ability to effectively resolve and minimize liability claims, and its goal of protecting its customers and employees from theft and other crimes. Unrestricted or unprotected disclosure of such information would result in prejudice or harm to Defendant by revealing Lowe's competitive confidential information, which has been developed at the expense of Lowe's and which represents valuable tangible and intangible assets. Accordingly, the parties respectfully submit that there is good cause for the entry of this Protective Order.

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 Action: *Jennifer Tapia and Carrie Johnson v Lowe's Home Centers, LLC., et al.*, Case No.: 2:25-cv-02229-GW-AGR.

2.2 Challenging Party: a Party or Non-Party that challenges the designation of information or items under this Order.

2.3 "CONFIDENTIAL" Information or Items: information (regardless of how it is generated, stored or maintained) or tangible things that qualify for protection under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(c), and as specified above in the Good Cause Statement.

2.4 Counsel: Outside Counsel of Record and House Counsel (as well as their support staff).

2.5 Designating Party: a Party or Non-Party that designates information or items that it produces in disclosures or in responses to discovery as "CONFIDENTIAL."

2.6 Disclosure or Discovery Material: all items or information, regardless of the medium or manner in which it is generated, stored, or maintained (including, among other things, testimony, transcripts, and tangible things), that are produced or

1 generated in disclosures or responses to discovery in this matter.

2 2.7 Expert: a person with specialized knowledge or experience in a matter  
3 pertinent to the litigation who has been retained by a Party or its counsel to serve as  
4 an expert witness or as a consultant in this Action.

5 2.8 House Counsel: attorneys who are employees of a party to this Action.  
6 House Counsel does not include Outside Counsel of Record or any other outside  
7 counsel.

8 2.9 Non-Party: any natural person, partnership, corporation, association, or  
9 other legal entity not named as a Party to this action.

10 2.10 Outside Counsel of Record: attorneys who are not employees of a  
11 party to this Action but are retained to represent or advise a party to this Action and  
12 have appeared in this Action on behalf of that party or are affiliated with a law firm  
13 which has appeared on behalf of that party, and includes support staff.

14 2.11 Party: any party to this Action, including all of its officers, directors,  
15 employees, consultants, retained experts, and Outside Counsel of Record (and their  
16 support staffs).

17 2.12 Producing Party: a Party or Non-Party that produces Disclosure or  
18 Discovery Material in this Action.

19 2.13 Professional Vendors: persons or entities that provide litigation support  
20 services (e.g., photocopying, videotaping, translating, preparing exhibits or  
21 demonstrations, and organizing, storing, or retrieving data in any form or medium) and  
22 their employees and subcontractors.

23 2.14 Protected Material: any Disclosure or Discovery Material that is  
24 designated as “CONFIDENTIAL.”

25 2.15 Receiving Party: a Party that receives Disclosure or Discovery Material  
26 from a Producing Party.

27 3. SCOPE

28 The protections conferred by this Stipulation and Order cover not only Protected

1 Material (as defined above), but also (1) any information copied or extracted from  
2 Protected Material; (2) all copies, excerpts, summaries, or compilations of Protected  
3 Material; and (3) any testimony, conversations, or presentations by Parties or their  
4 Counsel that might reveal Protected Material.

5 Any use of Protected Material at trial shall be governed by the orders of the trial  
6 judge. This Order does not govern the use of Protected Material at trial.

7 4. DURATION

8 Even after final disposition of this litigation, the confidentiality obligations  
9 imposed by this Order shall remain in effect until a Designating Party agrees otherwise  
10 in writing or a court order otherwise directs. Final disposition shall be deemed to be  
11 the later of (1) dismissal of all claims and defenses in this Action, with or without  
12 prejudice; and (2) final judgment herein after the completion and exhaustion of all  
13 appeals, rehearings, remands, trials, or reviews of this Action, including the time limits  
14 for filing any motions or applications for extension of time pursuant to applicable law.

15 5. DESIGNATING PROTECTED MATERIAL

16 5.1 Exercise of Restraint and Care in Designating Material for Protection.

17 Each Party or Non-Party that designates information or items for protection under  
18 this Order must take care to limit any such designation to specific material that  
19 qualifies under the appropriate standards. The Designating Party must designate for  
20 protection only those parts of material, documents, items, or oral or written  
21 communications that qualify so that other portions of the material, documents, items,  
22 or communications for which protection is not warranted are not swept unjustifiably  
23 within the ambit of this Order.

24 Mass, indiscriminate, or routinized designations are prohibited. Designations  
25 that are shown to be clearly unjustified or that have been made for an improper purpose  
26 (e.g., to unnecessarily encumber the case development process or to impose  
27 unnecessary expenses and burdens on other parties) may expose the Designating Party  
28 to sanctions.

1 If it comes to a Designating Party's attention that information or items that it  
2 designated for protection do not qualify for protection, that Designating Party must  
3 promptly notify all other Parties that it is withdrawing the inapplicable designation.

4 5.2 Manner and Timing of Designations. Except as otherwise provided in  
5 this Order (see, e.g., second paragraph of section 5.2(a) below), or as otherwise  
6 stipulated or ordered, Disclosure or Discovery Material that qualifies for protection  
7 under this Order must be clearly so designated before the material is disclosed or  
8 produced.

9 Designation in conformity with this Order requires:

10 (a) for information in documentary form (e.g., paper or electronic  
11 documents, but excluding transcripts of depositions or other pretrial or trial  
12 proceedings), that the Producing Party affix at a minimum, the legend  
13 "CONFIDENTIAL" (hereinafter "CONFIDENTIAL legend"), to each page that  
14 contains protected material. If only a portion or portions of the material on a page  
15 qualifies for protection, the Producing Party also must clearly identify the protected  
16 portion(s) (e.g., by making appropriate markings in the margins).

17 A Party or Non-Party that makes original documents available for inspection  
18 need not designate them for protection until after the inspecting Party has indicated  
19 which documents it would like copied and produced. During the inspection and before  
20 the designation, all of the material made available for inspection shall be deemed  
21 "CONFIDENTIAL." After the inspecting Party has identified the documents it wants  
22 copied and produced, the Producing Party must determine which documents, or  
23 portions thereof, qualify for protection under this Order. Then, before producing the  
24 specified documents, the Producing Party must affix the "CONFIDENTIAL legend"  
25 to each page that contains Protected Material. If only a portion or portions of the  
26 material on a page qualifies for protection, the Producing Party also must clearly  
27 identify the protected portion(s) (e.g., by making appropriate markings in the margins).

28 (b) for testimony given in depositions that the Designating Party identify



1 the Disclosure or Discovery Material on the record, before the close of the deposition  
2 all protected testimony.

3 (c) for information produced in some form other than documentary and for  
4 any other tangible items, that the Producing Party affix in a prominent place on the  
5 exterior of the container or containers in which the information is stored the legend  
6 “CONFIDENTIAL.” If only a portion or portions of the information warrants  
7 protection, the Producing Party, to the extent practicable, shall identify the protected  
8 portion(s).

9 5.3 Inadvertent Failures to Designate. If timely corrected, an inadvertent  
10 failure to designate qualified information or items does not, standing alone, waive the  
11 Designating Party’s right to secure protection under this Order for such material. Upon  
12 timely correction of a designation, the Receiving Party must make reasonable efforts  
13 to assure that the material is treated in accordance with the provisions of this Order.

14 6. CHALLENGING CONFIDENTIALITY DESIGNATIONS

15 6.1 Timing of Challenges. Any Party or Non-Party may challenge a  
16 designation of confidentiality at any time that is consistent with the Court’s Scheduling  
17 Order.

18 6.2 Meet and Confer. The Challenging Party shall initiate the dispute  
19 resolution process under Local Rule 251 et seq.

20 6.3 The burden of persuasion in any such challenge proceeding shall be on  
21 the Designating Party. Frivolous challenges, and those made for an improper purpose  
22 (e.g., to harass or impose unnecessary expenses and burdens on other parties) may  
23 expose the Challenging Party to sanctions. Unless the Designating Party has waived  
24 or withdrawn the confidentiality designation, all parties shall continue to afford the  
25 material in question the level of protection to which it is entitled under the Producing  
26 Party’s designation until the Court rules on the challenge.

27 7. ACCESS TO AND USE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL

28 7.1 Basic Principles. A Receiving Party may use Protected Material that is

disclosed or produced by another Party or by a Non-Party in connection with this Action only for prosecuting, defending, or attempting to settle this Action. Such Protected Material may be disclosed only to the categories of persons and under the conditions described in this Order. When the Action has been terminated, a Receiving Party must comply with the provisions of section 13 below (FINAL DISPOSITION).

Protected Material must be stored and maintained by a Receiving Party at a location and in a secure manner that ensures that access is limited to the persons authorized under this Order.

7.2 Disclosure of “CONFIDENTIAL” Information or Items. Unless otherwise ordered by the court or permitted in writing by the Designating Party, a Receiving Party may disclose any information or item designated “CONFIDENTIAL” only to:

(a) the Receiving Party’s Outside Counsel of Record in this Action, as well as employees of said Outside Counsel of Record to whom it is reasonably necessary to disclose the information for this Action;

(b) the officers, directors, and employees (including House Counsel) of the Receiving Party to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action;

(c) Experts (as defined in this Order) of the Receiving Party to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action and who have signed the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A);

(d) the court and its personnel;

(e) court reporters and their staff;

(f) professional jury or trial consultants, mock jurors, and Professional Vendors to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action and who have signed the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A);

(g) the author or recipient of a document containing the information or a custodian or other person who otherwise possessed or knew the information;

(h) during their depositions, witnesses, and attorneys for witnesses, in



1 the Action to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary provided: (1) the deposing  
2 party requests that the witness sign the form attached as Exhibit A hereto; and (2) they  
3 will not be permitted to keep any confidential information unless they sign the  
4 “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A), unless otherwise agreed  
5 by the Designating Party or ordered by the court. Pages of transcribed deposition  
6 testimony or exhibits to depositions that reveal Protected Material may be separately  
7 bound by the court reporter and may not be disclosed to anyone except as permitted  
8 under this Stipulated Protective Order; and

9 (i) any mediator or settlement officer, and their supporting personnel,  
10 mutually agreed upon by any of the parties engaged in settlement discussions.

11 8. PROTECTED MATERIAL SUBPOENAED OR ORDERED PRODUCED  
12 IN OTHER LITIGATION

13 If a Party is served with a subpoena or a court order issued in other litigation  
14 that compels disclosure of any information or items designated in this Action as  
15 “CONFIDENTIAL,” that Party must:

16 (a) promptly notify in writing the Designating Party. Such notification  
17 shall include a copy of the subpoena or court order;

18 (b) promptly notify in writing the party who caused the subpoena or order  
19 to issue in the other litigation that some or all of the material covered by the subpoena  
20 or order is subject to this Protective Order. Such notification shall include a copy of  
21 this Stipulated Protective Order; and

22 (c) cooperate with respect to all reasonable procedures sought to be pursued by  
23 the Designating Party whose Protected Material may be affected.

24 If the Designating Party timely seeks a protective order, the Party served with  
25 the subpoena or court order shall not produce any information designated in this action  
26 as “CONFIDENTIAL” before a determination by the court from which the subpoena  
27 or order issued, unless the Party has obtained the Designating Party’s permission. The  
28 Designating Party shall bear the burden and expense of seeking protection in that court

1 of its confidential material and nothing in these provisions should be construed as  
2 authorizing or encouraging a Receiving Party in this Action to disobey a lawful  
3 directive from another court.

4 9. A NON-PARTY'S PROTECTED MATERIAL SOUGHT TO BE  
5 PRODUCED IN THIS LITIGATION

6 (a) The terms of this Order are applicable to information produced by a Non-  
7 Party in this Action and designated as "CONFIDENTIAL." Such information  
8 produced by Non-Parties in connection with this litigation is protected by the remedies  
9 and relief provided by this Order. Nothing in these provisions should be construed as  
10 prohibiting a Non-Party from seeking additional protections.

11 (b) In the event that a Party is required, by a valid discovery request, to produce  
12 a Non-Party's confidential information in its possession, and the Party is subject to an  
13 agreement with the Non-Party not to produce the Non-Party's confidential  
14 information, then the Party shall:

15 (1) promptly notify in writing the Requesting Party and the Non-Party  
16 that some or all of the information requested is subject to a confidentiality agreement  
17 with a Non-Party;

18 (2) promptly provide the Non-Party with a copy of the Stipulated  
19 Protective Order in this Action, the relevant discovery request(s), and a reasonably  
20 specific description of the information requested; and

21 (3) make the information requested available for inspection by the  
22 Non-Party, if requested.

23 (c) If the Non-Party fails to seek a protective order from this court within 14  
24 days of receiving the notice and accompanying information, the Receiving Party may  
25 produce the Non-Party's confidential information responsive to the discovery request.  
26 If the Non-Party timely seeks a protective order, the Receiving Party shall not produce  
27 any information in its possession or control that is subject to the confidentiality  
28 agreement with the Non-Party before a determination by the court. Absent a court

1 order to the contrary, the Non-Party shall bear the burden and expense of seeking  
2 protection in this court of its Protected Material.

3 10. UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL

4 If a Receiving Party learns that, by inadvertence or otherwise, it has disclosed  
5 Protected Material to any person or in any circumstance not authorized under this  
6 Stipulated Protective Order, the Receiving Party must immediately (a) notify in  
7 writing the Designating Party of the unauthorized disclosures, (b) use its best efforts  
8 to retrieve all unauthorized copies of the Protected Material, (c) inform the person or  
9 persons to whom unauthorized disclosures were made of all the terms of this Order,  
10 and (d) request such person or persons to execute the “Acknowledgment and  
11 Agreement to Be Bound” that is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

12 11. INADVERTENT PRODUCTION OF PRIVILEGED OR OTHERWISE  
13 PROTECTED MATERIAL

14 When a Producing Party gives notice to Receiving Parties that certain  
15 inadvertently produced material is subject to a claim of privilege or other protection,  
16 the obligations of the Receiving Parties are those set forth in Federal Rule of Civil  
17 Procedure 26(b)(5)(B). This provision is not intended to modify whatever procedure  
18 may be established in an e-discovery order that provides for production without prior  
19 privilege review. Pursuant to Federal Rule of Evidence 502(d) and (e), insofar as the  
20 parties reach an agreement on the effect of disclosure of a communication or  
21 information covered by the attorney-client privilege or work product protection, the  
22 parties may incorporate their agreement in the stipulated protective order submitted to  
23 the court.

24 12. MISCELLANEOUS

25 12.1 Right to Further Relief. Nothing in this Order abridges the right of any  
26 person to seek its modification by the Court in the future.

27 12.2 Right to Assert Other Objections. By stipulating to the entry of this  
28 Protective Order no Party waives any right it otherwise would have to object to

1 disclosing or producing any information or item on any ground not addressed in this  
2 Stipulated Protective Order. Similarly, no Party waives any right to object on any  
3 ground to use in evidence of any of the material covered by this Protective Order.

4 12.3 Filing Protected Material. A Party that seeks to file under seal any  
5 Protected Material must comply with Local Rule 79-5. Protected Material may only  
6 be filed under seal pursuant to a court order authorizing the sealing of the specific  
7 Protected Material at issue. If a Party's request to file Protected Material under seal is  
8 denied by the court, then the Receiving Party may file the information in the public  
9 record unless otherwise instructed by the court.

10 13. FINAL DISPOSITION

11 After the final disposition of this Action, as defined in paragraph 4, within 60  
12 days of a written request by the Designating Party, each Receiving Party must return  
13 all Protected Material to the Producing Party or destroy such material. As used in this  
14 subdivision, "all Protected Material" includes all copies, abstracts, compilations,  
15 summaries, and any other format reproducing or capturing any of the Protected  
16 Material. Whether the Protected Material is returned or destroyed, the Receiving Party  
17 must submit a written certification to the Producing Party (and, if not the same person  
18 or entity, to the Designating Party) by the 60 day deadline that (1) identifies (by  
19 category, where appropriate) all the Protected Material that was returned or destroyed  
20 and (2) affirms that the Receiving Party has not retained any copies, abstracts,  
21 compilations, summaries or any other format reproducing or capturing any of the  
22 Protected Material. Notwithstanding this provision, Counsel are entitled to retain an  
23 archival copy of all pleadings, motion papers, trial, deposition, and hearing transcripts,  
24 legal memoranda, correspondence, deposition and trial exhibits, expert reports,  
25 attorney work product, and consultant and expert work product, even if such materials  
26 contain Protected Material. Any such archival copies that contain or constitute  
27 Protected Material remain subject to this Protective Order as set forth in Section 4  
28 (DURATION).

1 14. Any violation of this Order may be punished by any and all appropriate measures  
2 including, without limitation, contempt proceedings and/or monetary sanctions.

3  
4 IT IS SO STIPULATED, THROUGH COUNSEL OF RECORD:

5  
6 Dated: 7/7/2025

JACOBY & MEYERS  
ATTORNEYS LLP

7  
8 By: /s/ Katelvn Dembowski

9 CASEY HULTIN  
10 KATELYN DEMBOWSKI  
11 Attorneys for Plaintiffs,  
12 JENNIFER TAPIA and  
13 CARRIE JOHNSON

14  
15 Dated: 7/7/2025

THARPE & HOWELL, LLP


16  
17 By: /s/ Andrea Breuer

18 STEPHANIE FORMAN  
19 ANDREA BREUER  
20 Attorneys for Defendant,  
21 LOWE'S HOME CENTERS, LLC

22 *Andrea Breuer, the filer of this document, attests that all other signatories listed above, and on*  
23 *whose behalf this filing is submitted, concur in the filing's content and have authorized the*  
24 *filing, pursuant to L.R. 131(e).*

25  
26 FOR GOOD CAUSE SHOWN, IT IS SO ORDERED.

27  
28 DATED: July 8, 2025

  
ALICIA G. ROSENBERG  
United States Magistrate Judge

THARPE & HOWELL, LLP  
15250 Ventura Boulevard, Ninth Floor  
Sherman Oaks, California 91403-3221

EXHIBIT A

ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND AGREEMENT TO BE BOUND

I, \_\_\_\_\_, [print or type full name] of  
\_\_\_\_\_, [print or type full address]  
declare under penalty of perjury that I have read in its entirety and understand the  
Stipulated Protective Order that was issued by the United States District Court for  
the Eastern District of California on \_\_\_\_\_ [date] in the case of  
*Jennifer Tapia and Carrie Johnson v Lowe's Home Centers, LLC., et al.*, Case No.:  
2:25-cv-02229-GW-AGR, I agree to comply with and to be bound by all the terms of  
this Stipulated Protective Order and I understand and acknowledge that failure to so  
comply could expose me to sanctions and punishment in the nature of contempt. I  
solemnly promise that I will not disclose in any manner any information or item that  
is subject to this Stipulated Protective Order to any person or entity except in strict  
compliance with the provisions of this Order.

I further agree to submit to the jurisdiction of the United States District Court  
for the Central District of California for the purpose of enforcing the terms of this  
Stipulated Protective Order, even if such enforcement proceedings occur after  
termination of this action. I hereby appoint \_\_\_\_\_ [print  
or type full name] of \_\_\_\_\_  
[print or type full address and telephone number] as my California agent for service  
of process in connection with this action or any proceedings related to enforcement  
of this Stipulated Protective Order.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

City and State where sworn and signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_